Monthly eMagazine of Vedanta Ashram & Mission

Vedanta Sandesh

Year 29

Mar 2025

Issue 9

Cover Page

The cover page of our Mar 2025 issue of Vedanta Sandesh/Piyush is a large & beautiful wader - called Painted Stork (Mycteria leucocephala) found almost everywhere in the plains of the country. Their local names are Janghil or Dhok.

Painted Stork is primarily white with black striped markings on the wings and bright pink on tertial feathers which give them their name. They have a bare orange head with a heavy yellow beak. Legs are pinkish. Males and females appear almost alike. They forage in flocks in shallow waters along rivers or lakes. They nest colonially in trees. The downy young are mainly whitish with grey bills and blackish facial skin. Like all storks, they fly with their neck outstretched. They often make use of the late morning thermals to soar in search of foraging areas. Like other storks they are mostly silent but clatter their bills or moan at nest.

An unmissable and beautiful large wader which reverentially reminds us of their awesome creator. Om Namah Shivaya.

Om Tat Sat.

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Vedanta Sandesh

Monthly eMagazine of Vedanta Mission

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वाग्वैखरी शब्दझरी
शास्त्रव्याख्यान कौशलम्।
वैदुष्यं विदुषां तद्वत्
भुक्तये न तु मुक्तये।।

Loud speech consisting of a shower of words, the skill in expounding scriptures and wise erudition — these merely bring little personal enjoyment to the scholar but are no good for Liberation.

Vivekachoodamani - 60

Message from Poojya Guruji

Aishana-Traya

True Fulfillment

Aishana means intense aspirations or desires, and a fulfilled person means that they are fulfilled and contended in themselves and by themselves, and therefore do not have any desires. This may sound logical perfect but practically the ways of the world are just contrary to these requisites.

Ways of the World

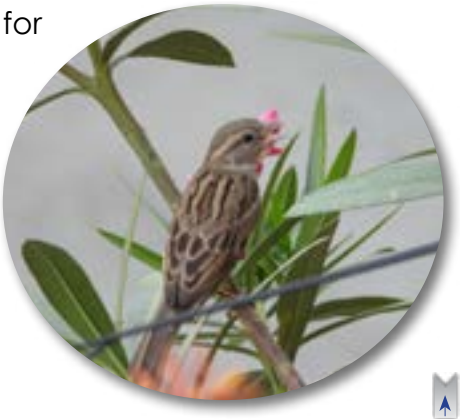
Desires are plans of our minds to make us fulfilled by getting things of our needs & comfort. Our happiness supposedly depends on acquiring a comfort zone which is prosperous, respectable and as per our dreams. That is the ways of the world, so obviously true fulfillment is so evasive and rare. In one there is no dependence whatsoever and in the other there is total dependence on things outside. If the smallest things gets disturbed and hay-wire off goes our fragile happiness and we are full of stress and anxieties. Great thinkers assure us that howsoever challenging it may sound yet one should be positive about the possibility of attaining true & lasting fulfillment - the Moksha.

Understanding Desires

Let us begin by understanding the range of our desires. Sages do this awesome classification and tell us that broadly speaking our desires are of three kinds. These are called Aishana-traya - the three aishana's. They are Vitteshana (desire for wealth), putreshana (desire for progeny) and the third is lokeshana (desire for love & respect).

- Vitteshana is not only wealth, money and property, but basically it is desire for security. As wealth assures fulfillment of all our desires and assures handling of all exigencies, so equating wealth with fulfillment of needs, independence and a sense of security, we all have clear-cut goals for financial security.

- Putreshana is aspiration for progeny or children.



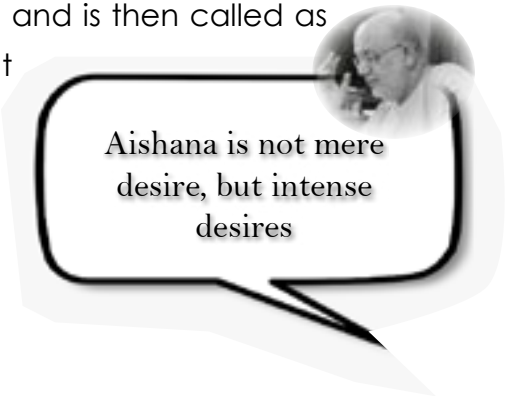
This obviously assures continuity of our lineage and family by rearing future generation with our values and perceptions. When we say aishana then it implies intense desire, rather attachment for children, and is we are somehow unable to get them then there is a profound lack or vacuum in our lives. For children there have to be both men & women so this desire includes these relationships and the physical & emotional bond between them. No wonder sensual gratifications is such a big issue.

- Lokeshana is intense desire for name & fame, respect and love without which we lack something fundamental and therefore there is intense dependence on this. This wish for love & respect is

from our family, friends and more so from the world at large.

Intense Desire is Aishana

Let us be clear that having desires for wealth, children and respect is not aishana. As seen above all these three are fundamental need of a heathy, normal & a social person, but we use the word aishana only when these become our prime focus and dependence. All these have role to play and there is nothing wrong with any of them but in some cases there is a kind of cancerous growth in their intensity, then it becomes our prime focus and consideration and is then called as our aishana. Without them we remain insecure and incomplete, which is untrue and need not be so.



Desires transform into Aishana

It is interesting to note how normal desires get transformed into aishanas. This happens when means become ends. When we equate these extraneous cordialities into prescription for lasting and true happiness. When desires get transformed into aishanas then it is like getting some cancer. Cancer indicates uncontrollable growth of some parts and also having the capacity to infiltrate all parts of our body. Definitely this kind of desires become more of a handicap rather than cordiality. That which can potentially become an aishana is initially an object of our prayers and dreams to lead a positive & productive life. In fact to lead an independent and good life we do need all these cordialities. Lest we make the means as ends,

we obviously need to be clear of the nature of 'end', or the way to true & lasting fulfillment.

Bandhan & Moksha

How do we attain Moksha? If Moksha being contended in oneself by oneself, then obviously the real end is to intimately and clearly know and realize our real & true self, knowing which there is total contentment. This is a far cry from our present day perceptions about our self, so a very deep self-introspection is the way to go. So we need to create basic cordialities in life to lead a healthy and productive life and thereafter introspection and meditation. However, not getting any guidance and motivation for such a life our healthy and normal desires get transformed into aishanas and we not only miss the real goal but

get umpteen anxieties and problems.

The Secret of avoiding Cancer

As we follow the healthy Art of Living, specially the Gita way of living, our lives will be all the more productive and fulfilled. We will not only be blessed with a fine intellect but also will get all the essentials of human life to live a good life, namely our desires for wealth, progeny and respect. As we get all these things in bundles then we need to be all the more careful of increasing our dependence on these fundamentals. We basically cannot avoid wealth, love and respect, but need ways & means by which we remain insulated. So all those who advise us to completely avoid the so called Kanchan, Kamini and Kirti are telling something impractical. What we rather

need to learn is to truly see these are fruits of good values and actions and focus on them alone. That is the essence of Karma Yoga. So Karma Yoga is the way to keep focus on the fundamentals of life, even while living in the midst of all prosperity and fame. That is how we keep aishanas at bay and yet lead an intelligent life culminating in self-realization and self-contentment.

Om Tat Sat

DRIG DRISHYA VIVEKA

Swamini Samatananda

Shloka - 28

अखण्डैकरसं वस्तु
सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणम्।
इत्यविच्छिन्नचिन्तेयं
समाधिर्मध्यमो भवेत्॥

The entity which is (always) of the same nature and unlimited (by time, space etc.) and which is characterised by Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, is verily Brahman. Such uninterrupted reflection is called the intermediate absorption, that is, the Savikalpaka Samadhi associated with sound (object).

DRIG DRISHYA VIVEKA

Sangati:

From Shloka 22nd onwards, in and through Nididhyasanam we are contemplating on the subject of Internal and External Samadhis. These two Samadhis have been further divided into three each i.e. three types of Internal Samadhis and three types of External Samadhis. In the Internal Samadhi the meditator discriminates between the

'thought and Consciousness' and shifts his focus from the thought to 'Consciousess'. In this entire practise of the two Samadhis one not only shifts his attention from the thoughts to the Sakshi Chaitanyam but also contemplates upon the lakshanas (pointers) of Consciousness which then culminates in direct realization of the lakshanas as the very Self and thereby dropping the very pointers and gliding into the Nirvikalpa state of Samadhi. Having revealed the intricacies of the Internal Samadhis the Acharya has now begun discussion on the External Samadhis.

In the practise of External Samadhi the practitioner takes the objects in the outside world as an instrument to ultimately

Everything has two aspects – its existence and its form

discover the absolute and unchanging truth of the world. Whenever we perceive any object in the outside world the object too has two dimensions to it. One is the name and form of the object and the other is the 'Existence' factor. Here one shifts the focus of attention from the name and form to the 'Existence'. As we intermingle with the diversity of names and forms, one comes to experience the fragmented, constantly changing and ephimeral nature of the objective world. In the practise of Baahya drishyanuviddh savikalpa samadhi one sees the fluctuating nature of all worldly matter and then turns attention towards that which is the constant denominator, in and through all the play of

names and forms. In this process one discovers the other dimension of the objective world. A dimension which is unchanging, unephimeral, indivisible, which is 'Pure Existence'. The Existence factor is the substratum of all names and forms. The practitioner practises this form of Samadhi which was discussed in the previous shloka and thus called the Drishyanuviddh baahya Savikalpa Samadhi.

Now once the attention has shifted

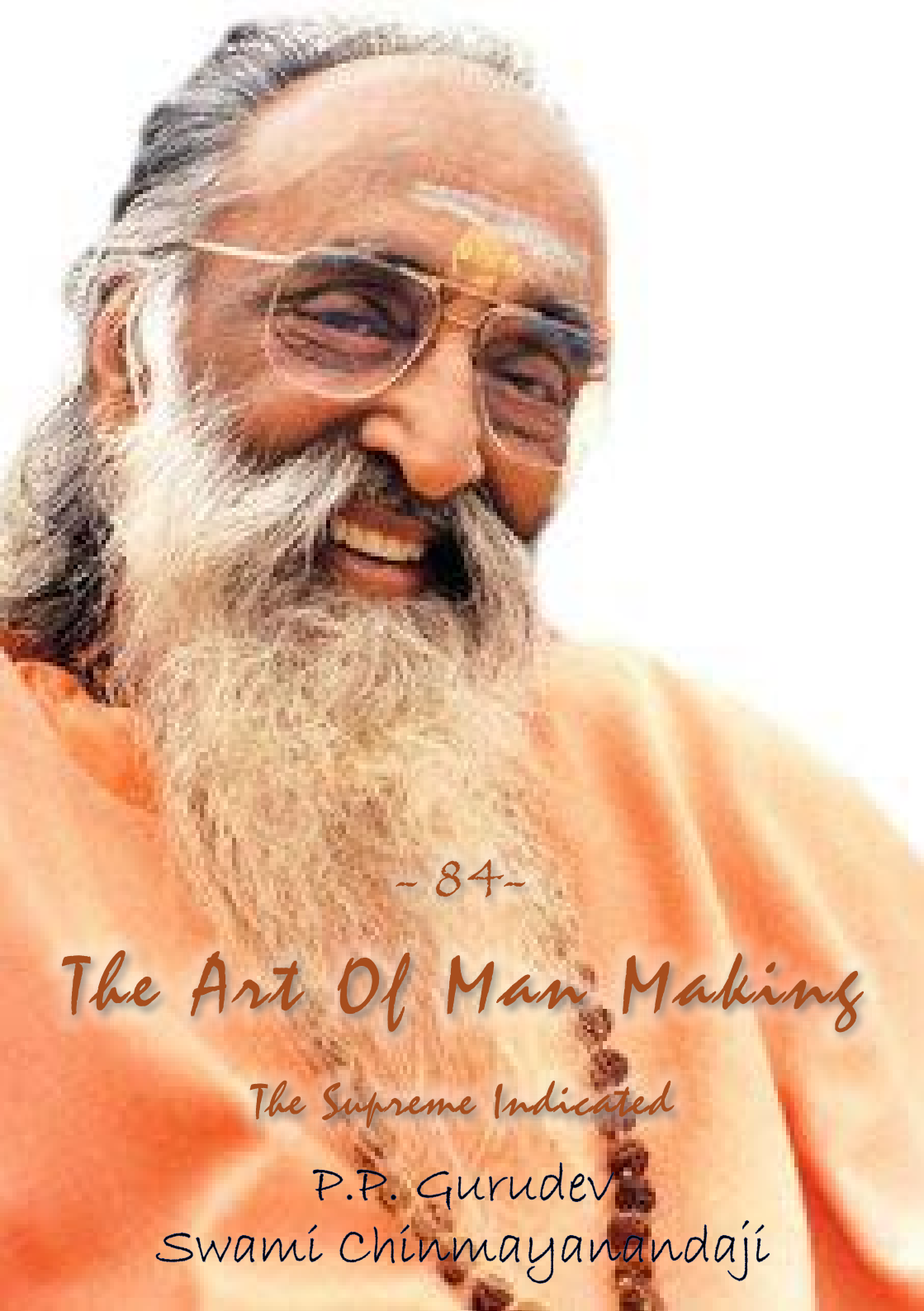
from the changing and fragmented objects to 'Existence' the Acharya guides us one step further to dwell in the state of pure existence. Thus the Acharya tells us about 'Shabdanuviddh baahya savikalpa Samadhi'. In this practise of meditation one now contemplates upon the nature of 'Existence' by the support of 'Words' from the Scriptures. In internal shabdanuviddh samadhi too, words from the Scriptures were taken but in internal samadhi one dwelled upon the nature of 'Sakshi Chaitanyam' i.e. Consciousness. Here in the practitioner dwells upon 'Existence'. In this verse the Acharya says 'Existence' is akhanda-ekarasam-sachidanandam.

Words of the Upanishads are used and thus shabdanuvid-

dha samadhi. Samadhi connected to words. When the Scriptures reveal the Sat aspect or 'Existence' in and through the Jagat then it does not imply that Existence is some part or property of the object and it is neither limited to the object alone. The object has limitations of time, space and objectivity but Existence is not limited. Existence is all pervading and unfragmented. Although existence may not be perceived because it needs a medium to manifest it. Existence is all pervading. Everything in the cosmos is present with an isness-a state of existence. The table-is, the computer-is etc. Pure existence is one undivisible whole and it is of the nature of consciousness and bliss. The entire Jagat manifests, sustains and resolves on the substratum of

Existence.

In internal meditation the focus is on consciousness and external meditation the focus is on existence. Practising these two types of meditation there is a possibility of assimilating Sat and Chit as being different from the other. This would be the biggest fallacy in Vedantic knowledge. The truth is that I am that existence who is the Sakshi in every thought. I exist and I know I exist. Existence outside is not seperate from Consciousness inside. Continuous revelling in this awareness is Bahya shabdanuviddh savikalpa samadhi.



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The Art Of Man Making

The Supreme Indicated

P.P. Gurudev
Swami Chinmayanandaji

The Art of Man Making

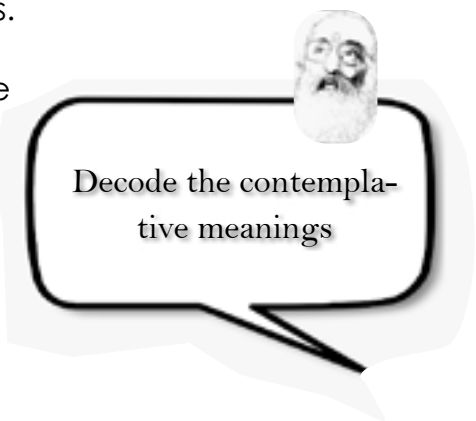
In fact, finite words can never express the Infinite. Yet, all scriptures strive to express It in language. The Supreme as Cause of the universe, meaning, as God, can, to a certain extent, be ex-pressed in terms of the world and our worldly experi-ences. But how can any sage ever express that Reality which expresses as God, world, and man?

The Art of Man Making

Since words cannot directly express It, the Rishis of India employed a "contemplative language", a language where the suggestiveness of words is employed, rather than the literal meaning of the word.

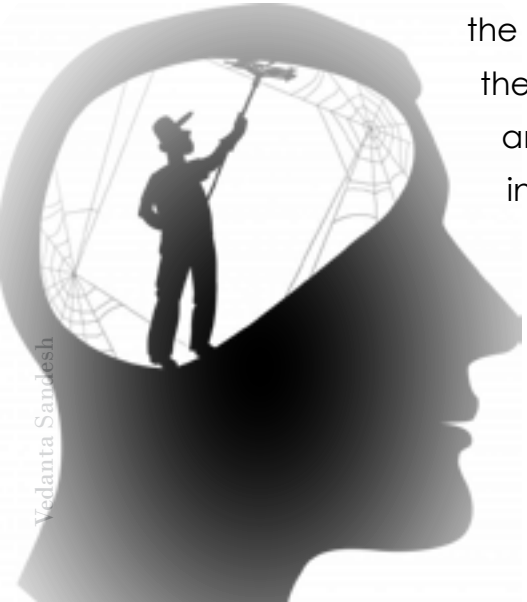
This we do even in our worldly talk. When we say, "The red ran this afternoon", we mean the red horse ran in the race. Simi-larly, if I say "My house is right on the sea", I mean that my house is nearest to the sea. Thus, in our daily conversations, we often employ the ringing notes of suggestions contained in words and in any sequential arrangements of words.

Thus, instead of the 'dictionary meaning' of words, sages employ in scriptures the



'suggestive meaning' of words. This is the only way in which the Inexpressible can be expressed, the Indescribable described, the Undefinable defined. Hence the beauty of all scriptures when you know how to read and understand them. This peculiar style is also the very spring of all difficulties in scriptural studies.

Copying from the Upanishads, Vyasa defines the Infinite Reality in the Bhagawad Geeta. Says Lord Krishna, I am the sapidity in water; I am the radiance in the moon and the sun; I am the OM in all the Vedas: sound in space; and manhood in men. In short, the Infinite is the Essence



Delve deeper to the lasting truth

in everything; "that" because of which a thing is a thing is called its dharma. Without its own dharma a thing cannot be what it is: thus radiance is the dharma of the sun and moon. Without radiance, the sun can no longer be the sun nor the moon be the moon.

The Lord continues, I am fragrance in earth; I am heat in fire; the "Life" am I in all beings; and in ascetics, austerity am I. The Supreme is introduced here as that subtle factor present in all, because of which things and beings are what they are. The poetic beauty of the statement is indeed awe-inspiring and mind-blasting.

Krishna indicates, Please understand Me as

The Art of Man Making

the eternal seed of all beings. I am the intelligence in the intelligent and heroism in all heroes. The Supreme is the one Source from which all names and forms have emerged. The world of forms is inherent in the Self. Just as a giant banyan tree, although unmanifest, is present in its seed, the sprouting of different vasanas constitutes the expression of different personalities.

Having thus indicated what the Supreme is in the system of the universe and its play, Lord Krishna labours to indicate Its presence in each and every bosom. I am the strength in the strong devoid of desire and attachment. I am de-

sire unopposed to dharma in all beings. This verse is highly meditative. The Infinite in us expressing as the Self is defined as the strength in the strong but a strength that is "devoid of desire and attachment". The "desire for what is absent" and "affection for what one has obtained" are the factors that poison 'strength' into power that tyrannises over others. Thus, in the 'strength' of Ravana, we see but the brute, the terrible, the ugly. While in Rama's 'strength' we glimpse the Godly, the righteous, the beautiful. When desire and attachment are removed from one's heart, the power of life, unimpeded, flows through us and the Divine Essence in us is unveiled, pure, and blissful.

Nay, the Lord goes one step

further in His thirst to communicate. Everyone knows, within one's own direct experience, the force of desire. Now the Lord says, "I am desire". But with a difference: I am "desire unopposed to dharma, righteousness". When desire is muddied with selfish passions and ogocentric lusts, it becomes vulgar, ugly, ruinous. But when desire is righteous, to serve others, to bring happiness to the community, that desire-power is a true expression of divine grace.

In these four verses that we have discussed now we have alltogether fourteen different indications, all pointing out the seat of pure Awareness in us, which is the very basis, the substratum of the entire universe.

The Art of Man Making

None of them defines Truth, or this great Reality. But they are all arrow-marks, pointing towards this One Truth. Those who can lift their minds in contemplation, along the directions opinted out, they can reach a unique state of consciousness. These are verses to be meditated upon. For, in four verses here we have fourteen different exercises in meditation.

Jivanmukta

Wandering In Himalayas

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Lake Manasa

Excerpts from the Travel Memoirs of
Param Poojya
Swami Tapovanji Maharaj

JIVANMUKTA

"One day, it seems, Apsaras were bathing naked in Lake Manasa. At the time, Suka, followed by Vyasa, happened tó pass along the shore of the lake. Suka was all nude, but the ladies did not feel embarrassed on seeing him who looked like a picture. But when their eyes fell on Vyasa, who was properly clothed, they hurriedly put on their dress. Struck by their strange conduct, Vyasa sought an explanation from them.

They told him, "Oh Vyasa, your mind still retains the idea of sex distinction. Your son, on the contrary, has not a trace of such distinction, because his mind is fixed solely on Brahman."

Were these wisely discriminating Apsara women the native inhabitants of the region? A large number of women here have been known to follow the Apsara code of conduct. Among the local people, it is not rare to find, even today, men and women without any sense of dharma, revelling in sensuous life, indulging unrestrained in bouts of drinking, meat eating, and sexual pleasures.

Not only the Bhagawata but also other Puranas describe

the caves near Kailas and the surrounding areas as the usual haunts of various Divine beings. It is nothing strange if the Tibetans of this region-who differ from Indians in appearance, character, and conduct, and who live immersed in the pleasures of the senses-are conceived of as a semi-divine race, outside the pale of humanity. All the Puranas agree that the lands to the north of India follow none of the rules of caste duties, and that the people of those lands have no sense of religion or dharma. If the modern Tibetans have thoughts of a world beyond, if their life is governed by moral principles, it must be the result of the spread of Buddhism.

This year there was a large concourse of Tibetans-ordinary men and women to the

modern eyes, but semi-divine beings in the eyes of the ancients in the Kailas valley and on the shores of Lake Manasa on account of the fair (mela). In the course of the circumambulation of Kailas, while I was resting at the second lamasery, I sat up until midnight in a quiet and beautiful cave before an image of Buddha, discussing religion and philosophy with the Lama who officiated as the high priest at the temple. Till 10 p.m. men and women continued to arrive for the darshan of Buddha, bringing various offerings with them.

We spent five days near Kailas in circumambulation and then we started for Manasarowar. During our sojourn in the valley, all sort

of natives, good, bad, or indifferent, used to come to us and watch us closely. We grew rather suspicious of these visits, especially as we knew that the region was haunted by freebooters. Man is, indeed, the strangest among God's creations. In the case of other animals there is no disparity between inner feelings and external appearances; the inside and the outside are alike. Whether it is love or hatred, joy or sorrow, their feelings are reflected in the face and there is no mistaking them. Animals do not desire, much less attempt, to hide their true feelings. Man, however, will often pretend to hold the very opposite of his real emotion. "A man may smile and yet be a villain." Man often hides his love under a veil of indifference, and conceals his hatred behind a mask of friendliness. Even though we had

suspicions about some of our visitors and had begun to feel uneasy, we were able, by God's grace, to proceed on the journey from Kailas via Manasarowar without worry, having found some merchants to keep us company.

STORY

Section

Legend of Shiva Linga

The legend of Shiva Linga or Lingodbhavamurthy is deeply related to Mahashivaratri. The legend narrates the story of vain search by Brahma and Vishnu to discover the Aadi (beginning) and the Antha (end) of Lord Shiva. The legend thus proves the supremacy of Lord Mahadeva over other Hindu Gods and explains why the lingam is believed to be one of the most potent emblems in Hin-

du ideals. The story is stated in the three of the puranas - the Kurma Purana, the Vayu Purana and Shiva Purana

The Legend

According to Puranas, once the other two of the triads of Hindu Gods, Brahma and Vishnu were fighting over each other's prowess. Horrified at the intensity of the battle, the other gods asked Shiva to intervene. To make them realize the futility of their fight, Lord Shiva assumed the form of a flaming Linga in between Brahma and Vishnu and challenged both of them by asking them to measure the gigantic Linga (phallic symbol of Lord Shiva).

Awestruck by its magnitude, Brahma and Vishnu de-

cided to find one end each to establish supremacy over the other. Lord Brahma took the form of a swan and went upwards while Lord Vishnu assumed the form of Varaha - a boar and went into the earth towards nether land. Both searched for thousands of miles but neither could find the end.

On his journey upward, Brahma came across Ketaki flower. Exhausted and bewildered with his search to find the uppermost limit of fiery column, Brahma made Ketaki assent to lie that he had seen the top of the column where the flower had previously resided. Accompanied by his accomplice, Brahma confronted Vishnu and asserted that he had indeed discovered the origin of the cosmic column.

At this point, the central part of the pil-

lar split open and Shiva revealed himself in his full glory. Overawed, both Brahma and Vishnu bowed before him accepted lord Shiva's supremacy. Lord Shiva also explained to Brahma and Vishnu that both of them were born out of him and that the three were then separated out into three different aspects of divinity.

However, Lord Shiva was angry with Brahma for making a false claim. The Lord cursed Brahma that no one would ever pray to him. (This legend explains why there is hardly any Brahma temple of significance in India.) Lord Shiva also punished the Ketaki flower for testifying falsely and banned her from being used as an offering for any worship.

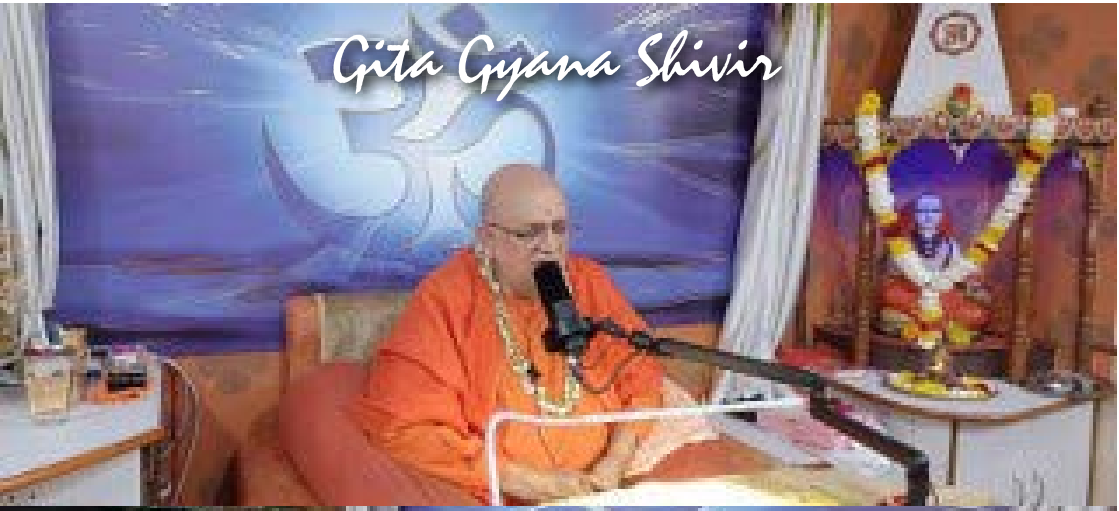
Legend of Shiva Linga

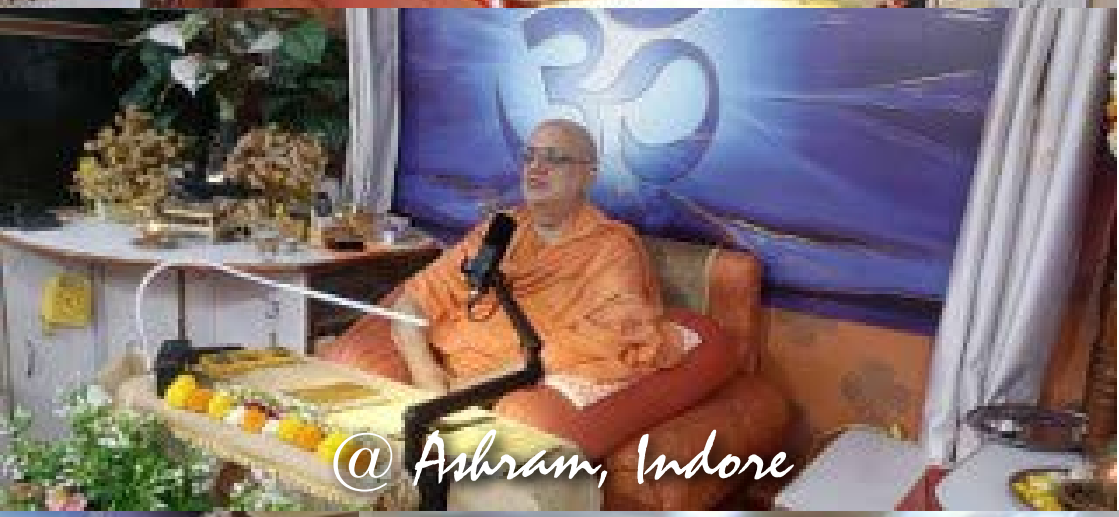
Since it was on the 14th day in the dark fortnight of the month of Phalguna that Shiva first manifested himself in the form of a Linga, the day is extremely auspicious and is celebrated as Mahashivaratri - the grand night of Shiva. To celebrate the occasion, devotees of Lord Shiva fast during the day and pray to the Lord throughout the night. It is said that worshipping of Lord Shiva on Shivaratri bestows one with righteousness, spiritual knowledge and worldly welfare.

Mission & Ashram News

Bringing Love & Light
in the lives of all with the
Knowledge of Self

Ashram News





Ashram News

Gita Chapter 5

Ashram News

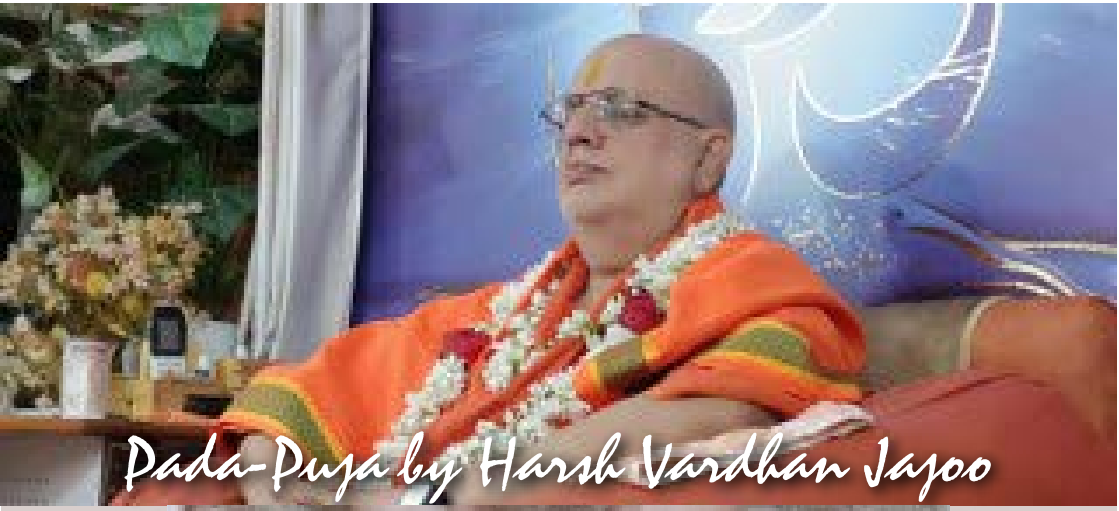
Chanting: Shiv-Sankalpa Sookta

Mornings started with Meditation

Ashram News

Concluding Session of Camp

Ashram News



Pada-Puja by Harsh Vardhan Jajoo

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Group Pics

Ashram News

Bhojan Pics in Ganesh Sabhagruh

Ashram News

Basant Utsav

on Basant Panchami

Ashram News

Flowery Decorations

Ashram News

Puja by Campers

Ashram News

Kirtiben (from UK)

Celebrates her Birthday

Ashram & Mission Programs

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on Google Meet

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Gita Chanting Class

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Every Sunday (4.00-5.00 PM)

INTERNET NEWS

Talks on (by P. Guruji) :

Video Pravachans on YouTube Channel

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